Chapter 52
Religious and Territorial Identities in a Cosmopolitan and Secular City: Youth in Amsterdam

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52.1 Introduction

Over the past decade, religion has been a much contested issue in Dutch politics in general and more specifically in Amsterdam. The Dutch capital city can be characterized as a cosmopolitan and secular city. The majority of the population has no religious affiliation, but new groups of immigrants are more religious and often see their identity largely defined by their religious background, distinct from the religions traditionally present in the city. The largest of the new religions brought to Amsterdam by immigrants, is Islam which has been widely framed as a social and political problem in public debates about immigration and integration. This chapter discusses religion in Amsterdam in this highly politicized context. More specifically, it will examine the attitudes of Amsterdam youth from different ethnic backgrounds toward religious and territorial identities.

Whereas in the Netherlands religion has mainly been portrayed as an obstacle for the integration of second generation immigrants, studies in other countries have proven religion an avenue to integration, for example for second generation immigrants in New York. Those who are involved in organized religion attend churches and temples where they are likely to come into contact with other ethnic groups (Kasinitz et al. 2008). By focusing on the identification strategies of the second generation immigrants, we examine the contribution of religion to integration and a sense of belonging in Amsterdam and the Netherlands.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section provides a brief introduction of the role of religion in Dutch society in the formation of the nation state and in the twentieth century, with special attention to the situation in the city of Amsterdam.

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The second section describes the main changes of the postwar (World War II) period in the religious landscape of the country and the city: secularization, depillarization and immigration. The third section introduces the contemporary public and political debates about immigration, integration, religion and national identity. In the final section, we present some results of a research done among Amsterdam youth of different ethnic origins to explore their religious and territorial identities.

52.2 Religion Nation Building and National Identity in the Netherlands

Present debates on religion in the Netherlands should be viewed in historical perspective. Religious diversity has been a characteristic of the Netherlands during modern history (Van Rooden 2002). The establishment of the Dutch Republic of the United Provinces and their resistance to the King of Spain were directly linked to the Reformation and the religion wars that devastated Europe in the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Protestantism was predominant, but religious tolerance was a major trait of the new Republic. The Union of Utrecht (1579) acknowledged the freedom of religion and the freedom from persecution for religious reasons. There were Catholic majorities in certain cities and regions. The Republic welcomed religious minorities displaced by religious persecution elsewhere: Sephardic Jews from Portugal, Ashkenazy Jews from Easter Europe, Huguenots from France and Southern Netherlands under Spanish rule, Lutherans from Salzburg, Quakers from England and Mennonites from Switzerland. They found a safe haven in many Dutch cities (especially in Amsterdam) and largely contributed to the economic growth and cultural development of the new Republic.

With the Batavian Revolution and the French occupation (1795–1815) and the establishment of the Batavian Republic later the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the French Empire, all citizens became equal and the Calvinist Church lost its privileged position. After the Napoleonic Wars, nation-building in the new Kingdom was marked by the idea of the Protestant nation (Knippenberg 1997, 2002, 2006). Although freedom of religion was a key tenet of the 1815 Constitution, Catholics and Jews were second class citizens. Catholics were often suspected of being more loyal to Rome than to the national state. Religion rather than language motivated the Belgian revolt and its separation in 1830. In 1848 a new constitution was adopted and nation building shifted from the "Protestant nation" to the "Dutch nation" and in 1853 the Episcopal hierarchy was restored. Meanwhile religious diversity increased due to several schisms in the Reformed Church.

In the nineteenth century, the struggles about the enlargement of the electoral franchise gave birth to modern political parties: liberal, socialist, Catholic and Orthodox and Protestant. In 1888 a coalition of Orthodox Protestants and Catholics took office in the national government, and the main cleavage in Dutch politics

became the division between believers and unbelievers. In 1917 a Pacification was achieved through a package deal introducing both universal franchise (a demand of the socialists) and equal financing of confessional and public education (a demand of the confessional parties) (Knippenberg and De Pater 1990).

The period following pacification is characterised by pillarization, or consociational democracy, as the Dutch American political scientist Lijphart 1968 would name it (see Wintle 2007 for a recent appraisal), the organization of Dutch society in separated pillars. This vertical organization of social life meant that anyone would live in pillarized institutions, with little interaction with people belonging to other pillars. A Catholic would not only go to a Catholic Church, he would go to a Catholic school, vote for Catholic party, read a Catholic newspaper, be the member of a Catholic trade union, visit a Catholic hospital, play sports in Catholic club, rent a dwelling owned by a Catholic housing association, etc. and last but not least, have friends and marry in the same pillar. Cross-pillar cooperation was the work of the elites.

The Catholic and the Protestant pillars (the latter divided religiously among several Protestant denominations, of which the Dutch Reformed was the largest) were complemented by a socialist and a liberal pillar, which were organized more loosely (especially the liberal one). As a result of this pillarisation system, the number of inhabitants declaring no denominations was high as this was recorded in the municipal administration and consequential for the financing of different institutions. This accurate and detailed registration of religious denomination greatly facilitated the deportation of Dutch Jews during the German occupation. Pillarized institutions, most notably political parties, were re-established after the Liberation in 1945, but since then the Dutch religious landscape drastically changed.

52.3 Post-war Changes in the Dutch Religions Landscape

Two main processes characterize the relations between religion and national identity in the postwar period: the first is driven by individualization and secularization, the second pertains to the religious consequences of international immigration.

The 1960s were a particularly important turn in Dutch society with a strong movement against the hierarchical and vertical organization of the society. Individualisation and secularization eroded the pillarised institutions (Sengers 2005). Religion became marginalized as a sociopolitical issue through a wide array of emancipatory movements in the 1960s and 1970s: youth movements (Provo, Kabouters, squatters), feminist movements, gay and lesbian movements. They undermined the religious and patriarchal forms of authority on which the pillarised society was grounded (Mamadouh 1992; Kennedy 1995; Van der Donk et al. 2006). Religion became less important: the proportion of mixed marriages increased and confessional parties lost their taken for granted electorate. In addition, an ever growing number of people reported not to belong to any religious denomination. While in the first half of the twentieth century all Protestant churches, but the orthodox

Table 52.1 Religious composition of the Dutch population age 18 years and older

	1899 (%)	1920 (%)	1930 (%)	1947 (%)	1960 (%)	1971 (%)	1985[a] (%)	2000[a] (%)	2005[b] (%)	2009[b] (%)
Dutch/Reformed churches[c]	56	50	44	40	37	33	28	21	21	18
Roman Catholic	35	36	36	38	40	40	37	32	30	28
Other	6	6	5	5	4	2	5	8	9	10
No affiliation	2	8	14	17	18	23	31	40	41	44

Data source: Statistics Netherlands 2012

[a]Since the last census in 1971, data are based on surveys

[b]From 2005 onward the weighing method has been changed to better represent ethnic minorities in surveys. As a result their religious affiliations are better represented than in previous surveys. This has caused an increase of the category 'other denominations'

[c]Since 2005 this category also features the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PKN), a merger of the Netherlands Reformed Church, Reformed Churches in the Netherlands and the Evangelical Lutheran Church

Calvinist, lost members, secularisation affected the Roman Catholics and Orthodox Calvinists from the 1960s onwards. As a result, the percentage of the population not linked to a denomination continued to grow (Table 52.1).

One of the main outcomes of this process of depillarization was the erosion of the religious determination of voting behavior, hollowing out the electorate of the confessional parties. In 1980 the main Catholic and Protestant political parties merged into a single Christian Democratic Party to conserve their dominant position in national politics. The Labour Party also lost its privileged ties with the red pillar and the electorate became more volatile. This – in combination with an extreme proportional voting system – opened the Parliament to successive protest parties.

In the postwar period, while traditional religions became less and less important in Dutch society, the Netherlands, previously a country of emigration, became a country of immigration (Penninx et al. 1994; Lucassen and Penninx 1997; Özüekren and Van Kempen 1997; Vermeulen and Penninx 2000; Fennema et al. 2000; Lucassen et al. 2006; Doomernik and Knippenberg 2003; Knippenberg 2005; Bernts et al. 2007). Repatriates and migrants from the former colonies (Indonesia and later Suriname), from guest worker recruitment areas (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Turkey, Morocco) and from conflict areas (with asylum seekers from Asia, Southeastern Europe and Africa), settled in the Netherlands. Many of these immigrants and refugees were Muslims. Based on the country of origins of immigrants and their descendants the number of Muslims in the Netherlands is estimated to be about 6 % of the population (Table 52.2). The Muslim population is ethnically diverse, including Dutch converts, but Turks and Moroccans form by far the two biggest national groups. Most of them live in the larger cities. In 2010 about 13 % of the population in the Amsterdam agglomeration was Muslim, about twice as much as the national average.

Table 52.2 Muslim and Hindu percentage of the population in the Netherlands, 1971–2004

	1971	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2004
Muslim	0.5	0.8	1.7	2.3	3.1	4.1	5.1	5.8
Hindu	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6

Data source: Statistics Netherlands 2012

Table 52.3 Religious denominations in Amsterdam, 1900–2010

Religious denomination	1900 (%)	1930 (%)	1947 (%)	1960 (%)	1971 (%)	1984 (%)	1992 (%)	2000 (%)	2005 (%)	2010 (%)
Dutch Reformed Church/Reformed Churches in The Netherlands/ Protestant Church in the Netherlands	46	25	24	22	18	13	9	4	4	3
Roman Catholic	23	22	23	24	23	24	20	11	9	9
Judaism	12	9	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Islam	0	0	0	0	0	7	9	15	11	13
Other	14	9	7	5	5	7	4			
No denomination / affiliation	6	35	45	48	54	48	58			

Data source: O+S Amsterdam 2012
1900–1992: Amsterdam city register (based on registered membership in municipal population register)
2000–2010: Burgermonitor O+S Survey (based on reported affiliation in local survey Burgermonitor)

Religious diversity and tolerance were historically always greater in the Dutch cities than in the countryside and this is particularly true for Amsterdam (Mak 2001). The city has a particularly rich history of religious pluralism (most notably German and Portuguese Jews and Huguenots) and of secularism. In Amsterdam 35 % of the inhabitants had no religion in 1930 (Kaal 2011). The Dutch Reformed and the Catholics were groups of equal size, and Jews formed an important minority until their deportation and extermination during the Holocaust (Table 52.3). The city has attracted a large share of immigrants over the past decades, guestworkers, asylum seekers, artists, students and expats. Since the 1960s it also has a solid world reputation for alternative lifestyles and sexual emancipation (Mamadouh 1992; Kennedy 1995; Deben et al. 2000; Musterd and Salet 2003).

In Amsterdam the national trend towards secularization is sharper than in the rest of the country and a larger share of the population is not affiliated with any religion (see Table 52.3). Immigration has brought religious diversity to the city, where Islam is now the largest religion. In 1900 one Muslim was listed in the register of the municipality of Amsterdam, in 2000 this had increased to over 88,000 Islamic adults (Van der Steenhoven 2001). Since 2000 the share of Amsterdammers reporting some affinity with a religion or a spiritual group has hardly changed: about 4 out of 10. Islam and Christianity are by far the largest religions in town (Booi et al. 2011).

Table 52.4 Religious and spiritual affiliation in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, 2008 and 2010, based on the survey question: Do you feel affiliated with a religion or philosophy of life?

	Amsterdam		Rotterdam	
Ethnic group[a]	2008 (%)	2010 (%)	2008 (%)	2010 (%)
Surinamese	50	64	86	84
Turkish	78	82	93	97
Moroccan	76	88	96	98
Other Non-Western[a]	60	62	75	71
Western[a]	37	35	55	53
Dutch	24	21	35	36
Total	39	39	51	49

Data source: O+S (Amsterdam) and COS (Rotterdam) in Gemeente Rotterdam & Gemeente Amsterdam (2012: 128)

[a]Dutch statistics use the place of birth of parents to categorize individuals and distinguish between Western and Non-Western foreign places of birth

There is a difference the importance of religious affiliations between ethnic groups. Moroccans and Turks are the most religious groups (90 and 82 %), inhabitants of Dutch origin the least (21 %). In addition, young people (until 25 years old) are more religious than other age groups. This is related to the population structure. There is a larger share of inhabitants of Moroccan and Turkish origin (the two groups with the largest share of believers) in this age group (Phalet and Ter Wal 2004; Crul and Doomernik 2003; Crul and Heering 2008; Van der Steenhoven 2001).

Table 52.4 shows that Amsterdam is a more secular city, even compared to the second Dutch city Rotterdam. Overall respondents are (10 percentage points) less often prone to see themselves as belonging to a religious denomination than in Rotterdam. This is true for all ethnic groups. However, while the figure seems rather stable for most groups, in Amsterdam there is a relevant raise among Surinamese and Moroccan respondents.

52.4 The Public Debate About Religion and National Identity

Due to immigration, the place of religion in society and its relations with the state are back as important objects of public debate (Kennedy 2010: 155, but also Bader 2007). In that debate, religion is often discussed in relation to immigration and integration problems. The Dutch approach to immigration and integration has often been called "multicultural" (Vink 2007; Maussen and Bogers 2010). More specifically, similarities with the eroded but still visible pillarisation system have been noted (Landman 1992). It seems indeed that the past pacification arrangements inspired the Dutch authorities to approach migrant communities as potential new pillars and to give religious leaders and religious organizations much leverage in the organization of social and cultural activities. Institutions created to sustain Catholic and Protestant schools, for example, made it easy to set up Muslim schools.

By contrast, the presence of immigrants and their place in society was much disputed. In the 1980s a small extreme right party gathered some electoral support and – thanks to a nation-wide proportional voting system – a seat in the Second Chamber of the national parliament. In the 1990s mainstream conservative politicians, such as the leader of the Conservative party VVD, Frits Bolkestein, who became later European Commissioner, voiced doubts about the place of Islam in Dutch society (Bolkestein and Arkoun 1994; Bolkestein and Von der Fuhr 1997). The political debate further broadened after 2000, when the Labour Party also came to problematize the multicultural society (Scheffer 2000, 2007). By 2001 Pim Fortuyn entered the political debate with a new anti-Islam political platform (Fortuijn 1997, 2001; Pels 2003; Mamadouh and Van der Wusten 2004). The attack of 9-11 2001 and the assassination of Fortuyn by an animal rights activist in May 2002 brought the divisions in the consensus oriented political culture of the Netherlands to the fore. The polarization continued with the campaign of the Conservative MP Ayaan Hirsi Ali (a former Muslim of Somali origin) against Islam and for the emancipation of Muslim women (Hirsi Ali 2005; Hirsi Ali and Wilders 2003). In November 2004 a young Dutch Muslim of Moroccan origin assassinated Theo van Gogh in Amsterdam in November 2004, after he made a movie called Submission for Hirsi Ali (Buruma 2006; Mamadouh 2008; Uitermark and Hajer 2008). Another politician Geert Wilders dissented from the conservative party VVD in September 2004 because he refused to accept his party's decision to support the opening of the accession negotiations with Turkey as he opposed the accession of this Muslim country to the European Union (Wilders 2005). He turned out to become a major political factor with his Party for Freedom PVV with electoral success in the 2006 national elections (Lucardie 2007, 2008; Vossen 2008, 2009, 2010; Brinks 2006, 2010; Fennema 2010; Kuitenbrouwer 2010; Van der Waal et al. 2011; Mamadouh and Van der Wusten 2012; Van Gent and Musterd. 2012, see also Van der Valk 2003; Van der Veer. 2006).

During the past decade the political discourse against the anticipated Islamization of the Netherlands has been harsh, and it sharply contrasted with the previous immigration and integration policies that were often described as multiculturalist. Many issues were discussed including domestic violence, delinquency among Moroccan youths, gender relations in the public sphere, veils and burqas, radicalization and Islamic fundamentalism. In these debates, the visibility of religion in public space was at stake. Islam was often framed as the root of many societal problems and more bluntly as a religion incompatible with Dutch society. There was also a fear of intervention from abroad from undemocratic states (Dijkink and Van der Welle 2009) and fundamentalist movements through foreign imams in the mosques. For this reason some efforts have been deployed to establish imam training tracks at Dutch universities, but this is also much disputed as it affects views of the relations between state and religion. Moreover the relation of the second generation youth to the national society has been problematized (Mamadouh 2001, 2003) as were national identity and identification (Meurs 2007).

In Amsterdam, the combination of the presence of a large share of Muslims in the city population and a specific political culture characterized by left-wing orientation and tolerance to diverse lifestyles, the national debates had a slightly

different impact, although contentious too (Uitermark and Gielen 2010). The Mayor of Amsterdam Job Cohen, affiliated with the Labour Party, was both acclaimed and criticized for his handling of the situation after the murder of Theo van Gogh. Some saw it as a great achievement that clashes between ethnic groups did not take place (he was listed by *Time Magazine* as one of the "European Heroes" 2005); others were outraged by his consensual approach of marginal and marginalized groups. He was mocked for his appeasing approach to "keep everyone together" through tea-drinking and talking. This was criticized as soft and ineffective.

Meanwhile, the PVV gained ascendance and many were worried about the increasing influence of Wilders on the public debate. The party obtained 6 % of the votes at the 2006 general elections, but this score was lower in Amsterdam (4.5 %) than nationally, and much lower than in other cities (especially Rotterdam) (De Jong et al. 2011). The PVV advocated a no tolerance policy towards young delinquents and drop outs that were framed as potential fanatics and terrorists. For the PVV transnational terrorism (that is, Al Qaeda) and loitering teens in the streets were part of the same Muslim threat of Western civilization. In this context being Muslim, and religion itself, became framed as key societal and political problems. How has it affected the perception of young Amsterdammers (many of them with a Muslim background) of their religion, their city and the Netherlands?

52.5 Youth and Religion in Amsterdam: A Survey

The remainder of this chapter is based on a study of young Amsterdammers of different ethnic origins, representing the three main immigrant groups and those with a Dutch background.

Between April and July 2007 we conducted a survey of over 1,000 young adults living in the city of Amsterdam. The sample for this research was generated from the register of personal data of the municipality of Amsterdam (GBA) in which each (legal) resident is registered. This register includes data on ethno-national origins, such as the place of birth of parents and religion. The sample criteria were: (1) living in Amsterdam for a continuous period of 5 years, (2) born in the Netherlands, (3) aged 18–30 years old, (4) with both parents born in Morocco, in Turkey, in Suriname (they are known as second generation migrants) or in The Netherlands (known as native Dutch). The survey was mainly conducted through the internet using unique log-in codes, and partly face-to-face. The response rate was 25 %. Females and 25–30 year olds were slightly over represented. For the analysis, we weighted the data to take into account possible gender or age differences.

In addition to the survey, open-ended face-to-face interviews with 50 respondents were conducted. The interviews lasted from 1 to 3 h. Most took place in the respondents' homes, although some were conducted in public spaces (cafes, restaurants, workplace) or at the university. All the interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. The quotes in this chapter come from these in-depth interviews. The translation from Dutch into English is ours, and names are fictional.

Considering the political context sketched in the previous section, a context marked by the national debate on the position of Islam in the Netherlands and poor integration of recent immigrants and their descendants, what were the attitudes of Amsterdam youngsters with diverse ethnic backgrounds towards religious and territorial identities? We are particularly interested in territorial identifications with the city, the country, and the country of birth of their parents (if they were born abroad). We first look at religious attachment and religious practices, then consider the importance of religious identification in the light of other identification strategies. Finally we discuss their attitudes to religion and the public sphere.

52.5.1 Religious Attachment and Practices

Our second generation respondents were more religious than the young adults of Dutch origin. Over 90 % of the youth of Moroccan origin, 83 % of those of Turkish origin and 48 % of those of Surinamese origin considered themselves religious, compared to 7 % of those of Dutch origin. The young Surinamese and native Dutch were less religious than their parents. For the young Moroccan and Turks, there was no difference with their parents.

Almost all religious Moroccans and Turks were Muslim. The religious affiliation of the religious Surinamese was more diverse (in line with the great ethnic and religious diversity of the Surinamese population): 46 % Christian, 33 % Hindu and 17 % Muslim.

Being religious for most young adults did not necessarily mean that they were practicing it. For some of them, it was even hard to make a distinction whether it is culture or religion. The 28-year-old Farida of Moroccan background noted:

> [Muslim?] Well it is of course what you have been brought up with. Is it culture or does it belong to your faith? These are two totally different things that are linked together.

Organized religion played an important role in the lives of only a minority of the second generation respondents. Amongst the religious respondents, about a quarter of the Moroccans and Turks and about 10 % of the Surinamese attended a house of worship once a week or more often. The Surinamese Muslims attended the mosque a bit more often than the Surinamese Christians or Hindus attended the church or the temple.

In Amsterdam participating in organized religion is not necessarily a site of integration. Young Muslims especially were not likely to come into contact with other ethnic groups in the mosque, because mosques are, besides being attached to specific religious persuasions, often organised along ethnic (and linguistic) lines. The young Muslims did shop between mosques, but while doing so, they generally did not cross ethnic divisions. The 28-year-old Erdem, of Turkish origin, for example, shopped between Turkish mosques depending on the quality of the imam:

> I go to different mosques. But only to Turkish mosques. It just happens. Most of the time in Amsterdam West [where he lives], but we used to go out of town to a mosque along the highway …. The better the imam, the more you prefer to go to that mosque. Every once in a while there is an imam who is really good in getting his messages, what

> he knows comes across. But there are also imams who know a lot, but cannot deliver the message. So, if there is a talented imam, than I will go there. For a year or two, I have been attending a mosque linked to the Grey Wolves [a Turkish nationalistic political movement]. I went there because the imam was very good and not because I feel connected to the Grey Wolves.

An exception was 19-year-old Mohammed, of Moroccan origin. For him, going to the mosque is also a social event. It is a place where he met new people, and, therefore, he visited mosques linked to various ethnic groups. From his experiences, it also becomes clear that language is a barrier when it comes to "mosque shopping:"

> There are various types of mosques, for example a Turkish mosque, an Indonesian and a Surinamese mosque. I try to attend a lot of different mosques, because I would like to broaden my social circle, meet new people of different backgrounds. For example, I go to the Turkish mosque where almost only Turks are going. I hardly ever see a Moroccan … The sermon is in Turkish, so Moroccans cannot understand it… But my Turkish friends translate a bit for me. In the Moroccan mosque, sermons are in Arabic, not in Moroccan. There I see many more cultures. It is "pure Arabic," the Arabic they speak in Saudi Arabia and such. There they speak as in the Koran, so everybody understands at least a little bit. And there is one mosque in my neighbourhood, where they translate everything into Dutch, so everybody understands.

Most young adults stressed their individual relationship with faith. Private prayer, and searching for information on the internet or in books have replaced church or mosque attendance. The 29-year-old Fidan did not attend the mosque, and stressed her individual relationship with faith:

> I hardly ever attend the mosque. It is very individual the way I experience my faith. It is very personal. And I only talk about it with few people. Of course going to the mosque is something beautiful, the communal prayer. But faith also is sometimes very individual and faith says that you practice meditation secretly. You don't have to show it off or brag about how faithful you are. It has to remain your [individual] relationship with God. And that is very private for me.… And besides, going to the mosque does not fit into my way of life. I do not have time for that.

For about half of the religious young adults, religion gained importance over the years before the survey (Fig. 52.1). For most of the others, religion remained equally important. Only a few religious Surinamese felt that religion lost importance for them over the last years. All of them were Christian or Hindu. When the young adults talked about their religion gaining importance, coming of age was an important reason for that change. The 21-year-old Sarah of Surinamese origin explained that for her Christianity has gained importance because of the decisions she had to take, growing up:

> Religion gains importance, especially with decisions I have to take. Then I ask for example for a sign, or help me to make things all right, that kind of stuff. Yes, that happens more when you grow older.

Just a few of the young Muslims specifically referred in the interviews to the 9/11 2001 attacks as a reason for their religion gaining importance. Many of them were still young when the attacks happened. The 23-year-old Çelik, was 17 years

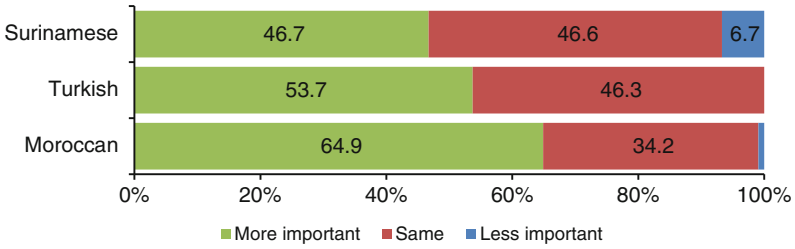

Fig. 52.1 Reported change in importance of religion among Amsterdam youth, by ethnic background, according to the survey question: Over the past years, have your religious beliefs become a lot more important, more important, more unimportant, a lot more unimportant or have they remained of equal importance to you? (Source: Author's survey 2007)

old in 2001; he stressed the influence of 9/11, but for him it was also a process of thinking about what he wants in life, of growing to maturity:

> I think that especially after 9/11 many young people started reflecting. What is happening here? What is this? […] I had a confusing period, not such a long time ago. I was tending towards atheism. But, and this sounds as a cliché, you start questioning yourself, what do I believe in? You learn more about other religions and ideologies. And for me, personally it led to the Islam.

52.5.2 Importance of Belonging to Religious Group and Territorial Identity Strategies

All young adults strongly identified with Amsterdam. They felt they belonged in this city, they felt at home and they felt "Amsterdammer" (Van der Welle and Mamadouh 2009; Van der Welle 2011). In fact, most of them primarily identified themselves as "Amsterdammer" but not as Dutch. There was no difference between religious affiliations regarding their identification with the city, but being Muslim did affect the identification with Netherlands. A considerable share of the Muslim youth felt discriminated against, based on their religious beliefs on a regular basis. This was one of the reasons they felt excluded from identifying as Dutch. Sometimes, they had the feeling they were forced to choose between feeling Dutch and feeling Muslim. For them, these identities were not incompatible, but they felt that the society around them assumed they were, as the 22-year old Meliha of Turkish origin explained:

> I feel Dutch. So I am that. But I am of Turkish origin and I am a Muslim. I just am. You know, forget about Turkish origin, I am Muslim, but also Dutch (Hollander). I cannot choose, because I love my faith and I love Holland. Easy as that. I hope that it will not get so far, that you really have to choose. […] But it already begun. I experience it already among my acquaintances. They feel they can no longer stay here, you are not a human being anymore, You are not respected anymore, because you are Muslim.

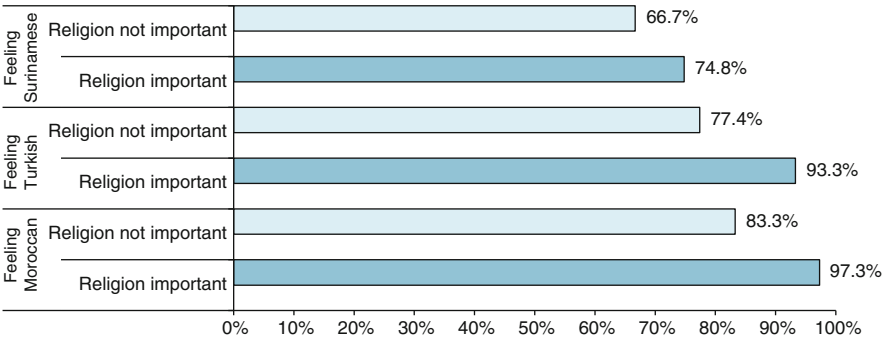

Fig. 52.2 Ethno-national identification by religiosity (Source: Author's survey 2007)

Religion did play a part when it came to ethno-national identification, but not for all second generation respondents. Surinamese Christians more often identified themselves as Surinamese (94 %), than non-Christians (76 %). For example, the Hindu Surinamese more strongly identified with India and as Hindustani. They did not describe themselves as Surinamese, as, for example, the 30-year-old Anja, Hindu and of Surinamese origin. For her there is a huge difference between Creoles and Hindustani, and she explained:

> Yes, what is my relationship with Suriname? To be honest, I feel no affinity for Suriname. I feel more affinity for India.
>
> Interviewer: Because of Hinduism?
>
> Yes, that is my culture, my identity even. I don't feel Surinamese. This is mainly because Surinamese are always seen as one of a kind and that is annoying. That really annoys me.

Almost all Moroccan and Turks considered themselves to be Muslim. There was, however, a difference between them in the importance they attached to belonging to a religious group. Respondents who attached great importance to belonging to a religious group, more often identified as Moroccan or Turk (Fig. 52.2). Besides, they more often felt more Moroccan or Turk than Dutch or only Moroccan or Turk. The 23-year-old Kadir, of Turkish origin had been brought up as Muslim but was not practicing anymore and felt he had been "Hollandized". This caused problems with his parents. He did not feel Turkish and explained:

> I always was the black sheep of the family. I am of Turkish origin, but it does not really fit. I am too "Hollandized" so to speak. The whole Dutch culture has been drilled into me, and that clashed with Turkish culture at home.
>
> Interviewer: Hollandized?
>
> Yes, I call myself the worst Muslim of the Netherlands. […] Fasting? You will never catch me doing that. I am not attending the mosque; I do not believe in God, Allah or whatever you will call it.

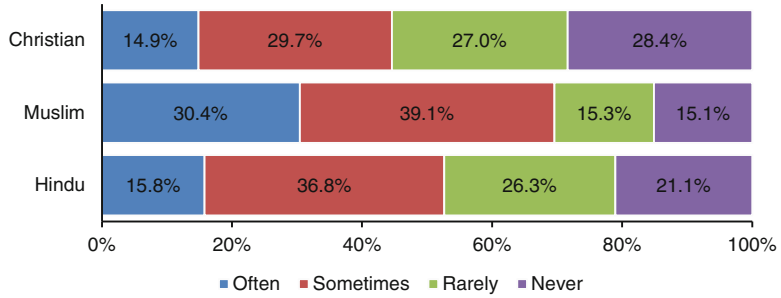

Fig. 52.3 Religious identity in the public sphere, by religious affiliation, according to response to the question: How often were you called to account for your religion over the past years? (Source: Author's survey 2007)

52.5.3 Attention for Religion, Religion and the Public Sphere

Because of the enormous amount of attention paid to the Islam in Dutch public debates over the last 10 years, the Muslim youth often felt they had to explain or defend their religious practices. The young Muslims were more often called to account for their religious affiliation, than the young Christians or Hindu (Fig. 52.3). This increased their awareness of their religious identity, or of being labeled Muslim by others.

The majority of the religious young adults reacted positively to being asked about their religion by others. Especially the Muslim youth appreciated it when people asked them about their faith. The 29-year-old woman Fidan, Muslim of Turkish background, expressed her feelings about this as follows:

> I think it has become more difficult to talk about Islam, because it is associated with extremism. [..] People think, "oh yeah it is wrong, it is scary." Then I prefer to be asked directly.
>
> Interviewer: And, do they?
>
> Sometimes they do. […] And I always show that I appreciate it, even so when questions are harsh or confronting. […] I feel it is the only way to break down prejudices. Because often they will tell you: "hey, you don't match the image I had in mind about Muslims or Turks." And you only have to do tiny things to accomplish this. Often people lead such isolated lives. They only read the paper and watch television. In their daily lives they do not meet Turks or Muslims.

Although there was a lot of discussion about radicalization and religious conservatism within the Islamic population in the Netherlands, when asked about tensions between groups in the city, our respondents did not frame these primarily in religious terms. A majority of them agreed there are tensions between groups and many felt that tensions had increased over the last years. However, they mainly mentioned tensions between native Dutch and other ethnic groups. Tensions between religious groups, or between Muslims and non-Muslims were mentioned a lot less.

52.6 Conclusion

Even though Amsterdam could be characterized as a secular city, that does not mean religion is invisible in the everyday life of its inhabitants. People dressed up going to church on Sundays, ladies wearing colorful headscarves, men in djellabas going to the mosque on Fridays, are common in the Amsterdam scene. A large share of young inhabitants in cities consider themselves religious. There is however a difference in religiosity between ethnic groups, for example between the young adults of Moroccan, Turkish, Surinamese and Dutch origin in our study. Almost all the young adults of Moroccan and Turkish origin feel affiliated with religion, compared to just a small share of the young adults of Dutch. The young adults of Surinamese origin take a middle position.

In any event, organized religion is not a site of integration in Amsterdam, because those of Dutch origin are in great numbers not religious at all, and the main new religion Islam is mainly organised along ethno-national (and linguistic) lines. And besides, affiliation with religion for many young adults does not necessarily mean that they are attending the church, mosque or temple on a regular basis. Many of them stress their individual relationship with faith.

In the Dutch context, Muslim is possibly more an ethnic identity than a religious one, like Moroccan is more an ethnic identity than a territorial one (Van der Welle and Mamadouh 2009; Van der Welle 2011). For the young Moroccans and Turks, religion and the Turkish or Moroccan identity are strongly interlinked. Those who attach more importance to belonging to a religious group, are more likely to more strongly or exclusively identify as Turk or Moroccan. Besides, for a part of them it is difficult to make a distinction between culture and religion. The Dutch public debate has increased their awareness of their religious as well as ethnic identity. There is also a link between religious identity and Surinamese identity. The Surinamese Christians more often identified themselves as Surinamese, than non-Christians. Part of the Hindu Surinamese more strongly identified with India and as Hindustani, than with Surinam and the Surinamese.

All of the young adults strongly identify with the city of Amsterdam, but not all necessarily feel Dutch. A considerable share of the Muslim youth felt discriminated against on a regular basis, based on their religious beliefs. This was one of the reasons they felt excluded from identifying as Dutch. The Muslim youth also were more often called to account for their religious affiliation. The young adults with other religious affiliations hardly felt excluded based on their religious beliefs.

Five years later the public debate about the position of Islam and Muslims in the Netherlands is still on-going. The prevalence of the PVV is limited in Amsterdam (9.4 % in 2010, against 15.5 % of the national average, but still much higher than in 2006). The geopolitical context changed dramatically with the election of Barack Obama at the American presidency, which was perceived by many immigrants in western Europe as a sign of hope for non-white citizens in the rest of the western World. Job Cohen, the former major was called to lead the list of the Labour Party for the 2010 national elections but failed to obtain a sufficient plurality to conduct

a coalition government. He left national politics in 2012. Wilders's PVV, by contrast enlarged its share of votes, became the third party in size, and with his conditional support became the necessary partner of a minority government led by Mark Rutte. As a result he was in the position to continue his campaign against immigrants, but he since diversified his targets with the immigrants from the new EU Member States (Poland and Bulgaria). More surely, however, religion was partially displaced from the spotlights by the U.S. mortgage crisis and the subsequent banking, economic and sovereign debt crises. Social economic issues regained prominence upon identity politics in the public debate. It would warrant a new survey to assess whether and how this has affected the religious and territorial identification of Amsterdam youth, but organized religion is unlikely to provide an avenue to integration in this secular city.

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